A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, July 19. 1711.

WHILE we are intent upon our new Adventures, Sir *Hovendon Walker* one Way, the *South-Sea* Company another, and our Eyes big with Expectations and promises of Success every where; *all of a suddain*, we find a Damp, or cold Sweat follows us, from the late Equipment of our Enemies, *the French*, which the Foreign Prints tell us are now publickly own'd by the Enemy, to be pointed at our *West-India Colonies*, whether on the Continent, or in the Islands, does not yet discover itself.

As I am concern'd that we should not bespeak our own Disappointments, by amusing our selves with improbable Prospects; and promising our selves more from an Undertaking, than is really in the Design, so I am neither for Discouraging the People, either as to our own Undertakings, or the Apprehensions of those of the Enemy; Wherefore I shall lay down two or three Things, previous to what I am farther to Treat on, relating to these Matters of Commerce, now *on the Wheel* among us.

1. For the Undertaking to the *South-Seas*; I wonder any should mistake me, when I have spoken so plain; I am, without Partiality, of the Number

ber of those who think it a Noble, Great, and Advantageous Attempt; I have no view to Persons or Parties in my speaking of it, one Way or other; the Attempt is worthy of the greatest Heads, and of the deepest Thoughts; I have often Lamented for my Native Country, that have, for now above eight Years, slept brooding over this very Proposel, and never hatch'd or brought it to Perfection, and thought it was like a Prize put into the Hands of a Nation who had no Heart to Improve it: While I am therefore endeavouring to state what it *really is* and ought to be, and what *it is not*; what Measures we may take, and what we may not take; I cannot think any one so Foolish as to suppose me Arguing against the Thing in the main, *it is impossible*, that would be Arguing *against* what I have so often Argued *for*, and what I had the Honour so early in the last Reign, to Propose to his Majesty King *William*— NO, NO, Gentlemen, I am not against a Trade to the *South-Seas*, nor in the least against the Manner of the present Undertaking, but I am against our Entertaining a Whymsical Notion, and building Castles in the Air, stating to our selves Notions of the Thing, foreign to the true Design, Improbable, and which is worse, Impracticable; I am against droping our real, Views, and taking up with imaginary ones.

If I can shew you how this *South-Sea Trade* is Valuable, and that more than equally so, where we do not expect it, tho' I should not agree that it is so Valuable where we do, you may perhaps be no Losers by the Exchange.

When a Man has receiv'd a Wound in his Body, or a Fracture of a Bone, or the like, the Physicians wisely give him inward Medicines to cleanse the Body, and prevent a Flux of Humours, to cool the Body and prevent Inflammations, to Temper the Constitution and prevent Feavours —— And these are, perhaps, as effectual to save his Life, as all the Operations of the Surgeons; BUT if this Man should fancy to himself, that the Bole, or the Pills he is order'd to take, shall immediately reduce the Fracture, or dry up and heal the Wound, and as we say, set him upon his Legs again; and upon being disappointed in this, should the Man turn Chagrin and Uneasie, reflect upon the Skill or Faithfulness of the Physicians and Surgeons, and reproach them with bad Designs, or not understanding their Business, would not this be very unjust?

To prevent this therefore, especially if the Patient be apt to be Waspish and Wayward by Inclination, Jealous and Uneasie, as some are, or have private Whisperers about them, who are not pleas'd with the Physicians, and would rather Employ others, it would be very necessary, if any can be found near the Person, who free from all these, Impartial and Unbyassed, and having no View but the Life and Recovery of the Patient, without regard or disregard to the Operators one Way or other, if such a one can be found one Way or other, tho' I confess it may be difficult to find the Man, yet if he can be found, he can do no greater Service, than to apply himself to the Patient, when *such* and *such* Things are Administred, and tell him, these Things will not set your Leg, these Pills will not stop the Blood, this Cordial is not to close the Wound; but these will cleanse your Body, restore your Constitution, revive your Spirits, to assist Nature, that she may aid the Surgeons, and be in a Condition to Act for herself, freed from the Interruption of Feavers, Inflammations, and Humours, which tend to Mortification and Death.

This is setting Matters to Rights, the Man is hereby kept easie, and expecting from every Application, no more than it is really design'd for; he is satisfied with the just, safe, tho' slow Progressions, towards a compleat Reiteration of his Health and Strength —— which is most certain this Way,

Way, but moſt certainly would Miſcarry, by Impatience and Diſcontents.

Thus, in your *South-Sea Trade* which is now Undertaking, *if you will think* of nothing but ſeizing the *Spaniſh Weſt-Indies*, that every Ship you ſend, muſt bring Home *Potoſi*, and the Gold of the *Andes*; That as ſoon as you ſeize a Port or a Place fit to fix your Trade, the *Spaniards* muſt give you free acceſs to all their Dominions, and Trade as readily with you, as if you came from the Contractation Houſe at *Sevill*; *If you will propoſe* immediately Shipping, the prodigious Glut of your Manufacture, *&c.* which now fills your Mouths with Bluſter, and talk of nothing but bringing Home Freights of Gold and Silver——— What does this all this tend to but Diſappointment, that Diſappointment Diſcontent, that Diſcontent Murmuring and Reflection, and at laſt, downright Railery and Reproach at the Undertaking and the Undertakers, calling them Cheats and Deluders of the Nation, and a Thouſand ſuch Things?

Depend upon it, Gentlemen, and let it be no Diſappointment to any Body, when you ſeize your Port in the *South-Seas* or any where in the *Weſt-Indies*, the *Spaniards* round you will be all your Enemies, *I mean as a Government*, they will forbid all manner of Converſe or Commerce with you, they will ſeize all the Goods you bring, even after their People have bought them, and puniſh the Buyers; They will do the utmoſt to Supplant, Diſtreſs, and Deſtroy you, and this not only while the War laſts, but even after the Peace, if they are in their Senſes, they will never willingly come into Articles of *Free Trade* with you, and whan then? Tho' this Phyſick will not ſet the Bone, yet it will Work with, and aſſiſt thoſe other Operations which will ——— The Trade and Commerce of that part you ſeize, which by juſt Degrees ſhall Encreaſe both in and with itſelf, and in proceſs of Time with others, ſhall be a Compleat Cure — And this Seizing of a Port or part of the Continent, which now by the Grand Alliance you are empowr'd to do, and which, on a Peace, muſt be conceded to you by the *Spaniards*, has ſo many Conſequences in it, Fruitful of infinite Advantages, ſhall be ſuch an Addition of Commerce, ſhall make ſuch an Improvement, ſhall return ſuch Wealth, ſuch Treaſure, ſuch Gain, ſhall be ſuch a Conſumption of Manufactures, ſuch an Encreaſe of Shipping, in ſhort, ſuch every Thing that juſt Expectation can wiſh for, and Reaſon propoſe, that it is well worth the whole Undertaking, and may make future Ages bleſs the Deſign, tho' now we are very deſirous to find Fault with it.

This is the Foundation I build upon, and I doubt not in the Proſecution of it, to do two Things.

1. To prove, that this Improvement I ſpeak of, ſhall, *if the Place where we fix be well choſen*, turn to a much greater Account in *Britain*, than a declar'd *Free Market* over the whole Dominions of the *Spaniards* in *America* would do; and tho' I will not pretend to lead thoſe, whoſe Heads and Hands are before me in this Work, yet what has formerly been thought of on this Head, may be of too much Service to be contemn'd: And without Reproach to the New Company, tho' the Execution of this Matter be reſerv'd to the Honour of this Age, the Counſels of the laſt may not be ſo mean as to be deſpis'd, nor will the preſent Company be able in one Age, whatever their Poſterity may do, to mend ſome Meaſures formerly laid down for this very Thing.
2. I may prove, that a Settlement in *America*, as now to be Undertaken, may open ſeveral new Scenes of Commerce in the World, which never yet were thought of, both for venting our Manufactures from hence, and opening a Trade from our Colonies in *North America* for their Proviſions, which are the Produce of thoſe Places, and the Glut of which, for want of a Market,

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is, at present, the Calamity of those Places; all which, may be a full and sufficient Recompence for the Adventure, and greatly Enrich this Nation.

So that upon the whole, the real Advantages of this Trade, will either Way fully answer the Undertaking, and if it succeeds, will be well worth our while, tho' an open Trade with the *Spaniards* should not follow —— Of all which I shall say more when I descend to the Particulars.

As to the second Head of our present Apprehensions, *viz.* Upon the Expedition of the *French* against our *West-India* Colonies ——— I will not say that they are in no Condition to hurt us there, or that several of our Island *Settlements* are not expos'd to them —— And if their *Attempt* is against our lesser Islands of *Antegoa*, *Mountserrat*, *&c.* I should be in pain for those Places; but if their Design be against *Barbadoes*, or *Jamaica*, I should hope we are not in so weak a Posture there, as some People imagin, and the *French* may meet with a warmer Reception there, than they expect, the Force of the former of these Places is greater than many People imagine, the Number of their *Negroes* very great, many Thousands of whom may be depended upon, both as to their Courage and their Fidelity; who, tho' I will not say they have great Obligations upon them, from the Christian Usage of their Patroons, yet as they know they are to change their Masters only, not their Servitude, have no Notion of Liberty from any sort of white People, and will venture their Lives, to preserve their Masters and their *Plantations* ——— From this, and the several Disadvantages of the Place for Landing, I am in no great Pain for the *Barbadoes*—As to *Jamaica*, it is true, the Island is large, and they may Land where they please, and commit great Ravages ——— But the People are Bold, Numerous, well Furnish'd and well Fortify'd, will make a long and a vigorous Defence, and if Heaven for their own Wickedness do not deliver them up, I believe they will not easily deliver up themselves —— As to our Colonies on the *Continent*, I am in no Pain for *New England*, *New York*, or *Virginia*, in other Places they may do Mischief, but the Advantage is not worth the Expedition, and therefore I see no Reason to expect them there; if their Design is really on our Colonies, it is most probable to be upon *Jamaica*, which is the great Eye-sore of the *Spaniards* and *French*, and which has the greatest Influence at present upon their *American* Trade, both as it is the Rendezvouze of our Fleets, and lies so upon their Coast, that nothing can pass and repass between *Europe* and *Carthagena* or *Porto Bello*, without the Observation of the Ships at *Jamaica* or their Sloops, which are always Abroad; wherefore here or at *Antegoa*, is the Place that I expect them at.

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